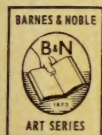


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No. 607



Manet

HENRI PERRUCHOT



ÉDOUARD MANET

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Henri Perruchot is a French authority on impressionism and author of several art books.

HENRI PERRUCHOT

Édouard Manet



BARNES & NOBLE, INC.

NEW YORK

Publishers • Booksellers • Since 1873

Editor: Anthony Bosman

Lay-out: Wim van Stek

Published in the United States in 1962

by Barnes & Noble, Inc., 105 Fifth Avenue, New York 3, N.Y.

© 1961 and printed in Holland by The Ysel Press Ltd, Deventer

Fourth printing, 1967

The career of Édouard Manet is one of the most curious in the history of painting. Whereas artists like Claude Monet or Paul Gauguin were deliberate revolutionaries, and would not have had it otherwise—"I wished to establish the right to dare all," Gauguin used to say—Manet himself was, to use a well-known expression, a revolutionary against his will. What he sought, and never stopped seeking, was official recognition. The day on which he was belatedly awarded the Legion of Honor, fifteen months before his death, was the happiest of his life. Yet this award was paltry when viewed in the light of the remarkable importance of Manet and his work, and the major and decisive role played by the artist in the evolution of painting.

This man, who wished for a smooth and respected career, caused the greatest scandals that any painter in the world has ever provoked. He believed that his efforts would be rewarded by what might be termed academic success; what he gained was the admiration and friendship of those artists who were the most rebellious and most hostile to the official bodies in the world of art.

His fate was indeed a curious and strangely ambiguous one, yet it was nevertheless in keeping with the psychological complexity of a man who was much less simple than was supposed. The painter was born, on January 23, 1832, into an upper-middle-class family in Paris. His father, a model government official, was head of the Office of the Keeper of the Seals under the July monarchy. For generations the Manets had held similar high positions. But such was not the case in his mother's

family. It was claimed that the painter's maternal grandfather had been a diplomat and that in this capacity he had helped to install Bernadotte on the throne of Sweden. But this was only a half-truth. In reality, although the grandfather in question may have assisted Bernadotte in realizing his ambitions, he was certainly not a diplomat. After failing in business he entered Bernadotte's service and, by a surprise move, he extorted a vote from the Swedish Diet which ensured the election of the French General. There is no doubt that this dual ancestry largely explains the artist's behavior and the contradictions in his life.

His vocation met with opposition for a time. Having started drawing in childhood, he wished to become an artist. When he informed his father of this desire, the latter was furious and demanded that he choose a "recognized" profession. In an impulsive moment Manet decided to become a sailor. He sailed to Rio de Janeiro on a training ship, "Le Havre-et-Guadeloupe" (1848-49), but he returned with a permanent dislike for the life of a mariner. His father finally realized that it was useless to oppose his vocation, and in January, 1850, the young man became a pupil of Thomas Couture, at that time a very well-known painter who was considered to be "daring."

Manet was to attend Couture's studio for several years, until 1856. However, he very soon found himself in disagreement with his tutor. Having been gifted with an extraordinarily sensitive eye, he could not accept the conventional aspects of the paintings which were admired at the time. "I don't know why I'm here," he used to say. "Everything we see is ridiculous. The light is wrong, the shadows are wrong. When I arrive at the studio I feel as if I'm entering a tomb. I know perfectly well that we can't ask a model to undress in the street. But there are the fields, and we could make studies from the nude in the country, at least in summer—as it appears that nudity is the last word in art."

Manet already showed a strong distaste for the half-tones dear to the academicians. In spite of inevitable influences, his own form of art began to assert itself. He had just left the Couture studio, about 1858, when he painted the "Boy with Cherries" (p. 37) and "The Absinthe Drinker" (p. 20), inspired by Baudelaire. Owing to its realism "The Absinthe Drinker" caused the final break between Manet and Couture. After seeing the canvas, the latter informed his old pupil, without mincing words: "My friend, there is but one absinthe drinker here—the painter who created this piece of insanity." Some time later the picture was rejected by the selection committee of the official Salon of 1859.

Two years later Manet gained a splendid revenge. Two of his works were accepted for the Salon of 1861: the portrait of M. and Mme. Manet, his parents (p. 21) and "The Guitar Player," which was given an honorable mention. Unfortunately this success was not to be repeated. Even some of the painter's friends—for example, Baudelaire, who was usually so shrewd about questions of art—were reticent about certain of Manet's works. Consequently they showed considerable reserve in their judgment of an oil painting with a fine "modernist" accent, "Music in the Tuileries" (p. 19).

Today all this may seem surprising. But we should recall what the Salon was like at that time; hardly anything was exhibited except heavy, anecdotal canvases, painted in a completely impersonal manner. In the artistic climate of the time Manet's canvases, which showed original talent and in which technique was infinitely more important than the subject matter, could hardly fail to shock. Even Delacroix had difficulty in gaining acceptance. Only those whose style was in strict accordance with the academicians' requirements were esteemed.

Since Napoleon III had married Eugénie de Montijo Spanish art had become fashionable. Manet inclined towards the pro-

Spanish feeling as completely as his friend Baudelaire and succumbed to it on numerous occasions. In 1862 a troupe of dancers from across the Pyrenees appeared in Paris. Manet painted a whole series of pictures of these dancers, including the full-length portrait of Lola de Valencia (p. 23), for which Baudelaire wrote a celebrated poem. During this same year Manet painted a work which was to cause considerable talk, "Luncheon on the Grass" (*Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe*) (p. 26).

Manet's sole intention in painting the "Déjeuner" was to reproduce Giorgione's famous "Concert" using contemporary figures. Incidentally, throughout his creative life Manet never ceased to borrow subjects and compositions from the masters whom he admired. He drew his inspiration for his "Déjeuner" not only from Giorgione's "Concert" but also from an engraving by Marc Antoine Raimondi after Raphael's "Judgment of Paris." It can thus be said that Manet had first-class guarantors. But they had no influence on the 1863 selection committee to whom Manet submitted his canvas: it was turned down.

That particular year the selection committee was so severe, they rejected such a large number of paintings (nearly three thousand), and the complaints were so numerous that Napoleon III commanded that a Salon of Rejected Paintings should be organized in addition to the official Salon.

It was there that "Luncheon on the Grass" was exhibited. It caused an incredible uproar. What were the objections to it? First of all, the subject, which was considered to be indecent, but to an even greater extent the frank manner, without artifice or evasion, in which the work was painted, and also the vibrant and sharply contrasted colors which seemed gaudy in comparison with the heavy tones of the other canvases.

Manet thought he had been misunderstood, and in order to make up for this setback he started another large canvas, a female nude suggested to him by Titian's "Venus of Urbino."



Photograph of Manet, about 1867

He intended this nude, "Olympia" (pp. 30, 31, 32) for the Salon of 1864. But he changed his mind and, acting out of a sense of prudence, decided that it would be better to submit two other works for this Salon; one of them was "The Dead Christ and Angels" (p. 40).

His prudence was in vain, for he was severely criticized. Following the advice of Baudelaire and several other friends, in 1865 he decided to submit the "Olympia" to the selection committee.

The committee accepted it. But as soon as the Salon opened on May first, visitors flocked to the canvas, shouting, laughing, brandishing their fists, and it was not long before the critics were also raising a storm of protest. "What is this odalisque with the yellow stomach, this wretched figure picked up heaven knows where?" asked Jules Claretie in *L'Artiste*. In *Le Grand Journal*, Amédée Cantaloube wrote: "Our eyes have never seen such a spectacle, nor one with a more cynical effect.... Women who are about to become mothers, and young girls, would do well to avoid this sight if they are wise."

This scandal made Manet more famous. But it was not the kind of fame for which he had longed. Poor Manet! To the public and the conservative critics he was henceforward nothing more than a "joker," a "humbug," a man trying to draw attention to himself by any means at his disposal. The public and social life of which he had dreamed was now well and truly compromised. In 1866 the selection committee of the Salon had no hesitation in rejecting his piece of pure painting "The Fife Player" (p. 33). In 1867 the government prohibited him from showing a topical canvas which he had just painted, "The Execution of Emperor Maximilian" (p. 42).

The scandal caused by the "Luncheon on the Grass" and "Olympia" had other consequences: it drew the attention of

young artists to Manet, and they found in him a master worthy of their enthusiasm.

Manet was in the habit of visiting a café in the Grande Rue des Batignolles, the Café Guerbois, which was next door to the shop where he bought his canvases and paints. The Guerbois gradually became a rendezvous for Manet's admirers. These painters were then unknown, but they carried within them the future of French painting: their names were Claude Monet, Edgar Degas, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Paul Cézanne, Camille Pissarro, Alfred Sisley, the future "impressionists" (they were given the name, derisively, in 1874). For the time being they simply formed what the popular press termed "the Batignolles school" or "Manet's bunch."

Not only painters but also writers and critics were to be found at the Guerbois. They included a man who was just starting to write and who was a friend of Cézanne, Émile Zola. In 1866 the latter conducted a campaign on behalf of Manet in a Parisian paper, *L'Événement*. He predicted the future renown of the painter: "Our fathers laughed at M. Courbet, and now we go into raptures over him," he proclaimed. "We laugh at M. Manet, and our sons will go into raptures over his canvases.... A place is waiting for M. Manet at the Louvre," he concluded, "just as a place is waiting for Courbet, and for every artist with a strong and determined character." We can imagine what repercussions such a prediction must have had. By way of thanks Manet painted Zola's portrait (p. 35). Portraits occupy an important place in the artist's work, as is shown by those he painted of Zacharie Astruc (p. 25), Théodore Duret (p. 34), and Eva Gonzalès (p. 46). One of the finest is undoubtedly that of Jeanne Duval (p. 38).

During the autumn of 1868 Manet started work on a vast composition, "The Balcony" (p. 36), and one of the figures portrayed in it is worthy of special note: the young girl seated

in the foreground, who is no other than Berthe Morisot. A relation of Fragonard, Berthe Morisot was herself to join the group of impressionist painters. She attended Manet's studio regularly and he painted about ten portraits of her. The powerful technique of most of them is unrivaled—for example, "Berthe Morisot behind a Fan" (p. 56), "Berthe Morisot in a Black Hat" (p. 57), and in particular "Rest" (*Le Repos*), a canvas which shows a wonderful sensitivity.

Manet was a great painter of women. An elegant man about town, a dandy with a cane and top hat, he enjoyed the company of women and loved painting them. He painted relatively few nudes; he was chiefly interested in painting women in attractive attire. His models came from all walks of life.

Just as Manet knew better than anyone else how to portray "the slightly savage simplicity of male children" (Paul Jamot) in canvases such as "Boy with Cherries" (p. 37), so also was he a remarkable interpreter of the young girl. It is true that the personality of Berthe Morisot, her beauty, her large, somber eyes, the inner life which animated her features, made her an ideal model. Manet was less happy with Eva Gonzalès (p. 46), the daughter of a novelist who was very well known at the time but is completely forgotten today. The portrait he painted of her has a certain heaviness about it. I should, however, add that, judging by the photographs of Eva Gonzalès, there also seems to be a heaviness about the model herself.

During the war of 1870 Manet, who was an ardent patriot, joined the army and took part in the defense of Paris. The war was a great strain on his nerves. Consequently, as soon as the armistice was signed he rejoined his family in the southwest of France. During his stay there he was to paint one of his masterpieces, a view of the port of Bordeaux (p. 55).

The sea, harbors, and ships were always a fertile source of inspiration for the former naval cadet. He generally spent his

holidays on the Channel coast and often returned with some first-class canvases. One of the most unusual is undoubtedly the "Moonlight on the Port of Boulogne" (1869). Five years earlier, in 1864, he made a special journey to Cherbourg in order to witness the battle between two American warships—the "Kearsarge," a Union corvette, and the "Alabama," a Southern privateer.

He painted a well-composed picture of the event (p. 28), which was exhibited at the Salon of 1872 and was warmly praised by Barbey d'Aurévilly: "I come of seafaring stock," he wrote. "I was brought up in sea spray. There are corsairs and fishermen amongst my ancestors, for I am a Norman and of Scandinavian origin; and this sea of M. Manet's drew me into its waves, and I told myself that I knew it... M. Manet relegated his two vessels to the horizon. It took his fancy to reduce their size by placing them in the distance, but the sea which he whips up round them, which he extends and brings right up to the frame of his picture, is more terrible than the battle... A great work, in both aim and technique... M. Manet has followed the example of the Venetian doge: he has thrown a ring into the sea, a ring which I swear to you is made of gold." It was in this same year, 1872, that the art dealer Paul Durand-Ruel became one of the artist's strongest supporters, after chancing to see two of Manet's works, including the "Moonlight on the Port of Boulogne." He gave proof of his support immediately by purchasing a collection of paintings for about fifty thousand gold francs (equivalent to about 125 thousand new francs). The following year Manet met with considerable success at the Salon with his "Good Bock" (p. 47).

However, this "Good Bock" was not so well liked by his Guérbois friends; they accused Manet of having made concessions to the academicians, of having "watered his beer." This attack was made even more serious by the fact that the

members of the "Batignolles school" were preparing to strike a major blow. Realizing that they had no hope of success with the official selection committee, they had decided to organize their own exhibition. They naturally wanted Manet to take part in it, but the creator of the "Good Bock," believing that this time success was at hand for him, absolutely refused to follow the lead of his friends. "Why don't you stay with me?" he asked with annoyance. "You can see that I'm on the inside." There were bitter discussions at the Guerbois. Degas was furious; "I think his vanity is considerably greater than his intelligence," was his blunt comment on Manet. In the spring of 1874, when the Guerbois painters' exhibition opened, Manet learned that only one of the canvases which he had submitted to the selection committee of the official Salon of 1874 had been accepted, "The Railway." This near failure was to be made worse by the controversy aroused by the exhibition organized by his friends, whom a journalist on the *Charivari* had dubbed "the impressionists"—the word caught on immediately.

It mattered not in the least that Manet was not included in this exhibition; he was still looked upon as the leader of the "rebels." The painter never agreed to take part in any of the subsequent impressionist exhibitions (there were eight in all, between 1874 and 1886), and nothing irritated him more than to be called an impressionist by the critics.

All the same, this did not prevent him from painting impressionist pictures. In 1874 he went to work with Claude Monet on the banks of the Seine at Argenteuil. There he painted some sunlit canvases, with light, vivid colors, such as "Argenteuil" (p. 64) and "In a Boat" (p. 60).

At the Salon of 1875 "Argenteuil" caused another scandal. "The Mediterranean," wrote Jules Claretie, "has never been as strikingly blue as the Seine when painted by M. Manet. Only the impressionists could embellish reality in this way. And



Manet with top hat and cane, drawing by Degas, about 1867,
Museum Boymans-Van Beuningen, Rotterdam

when one considers that M. Manet is timid in his effects in comparison with M. Claude Monet, one wonders where landscape painting will stop, and how daring artists will become when they wish to remove shadow and darkness from the whole of nature."

For the academicians the blue of the Seine in "Argenteuil" was Manet's chief fault; this time, they thought, it was by means of this "intolerable" blue that the painter had tried to get himself talked about. Tradition decreed the use of sea green. To use blue was looked upon as a kind of defiance.

"Good heavens, what's that?" one read in the press.

"It's Manet and Manette."

"But what are they doing?"

"They're in a boat, as far as I can see."

"But what's that blue wall?"

"It's the Seine."

"Are you sure?"

"Well, so I'm told."

Manet was extremely discouraged by this reception and in his next work, a portrait of Marcellin Desboutin (p. 50), he employed a much less original technique. But at the same time he painted a new impressionist canvas, "The Washing" (p. 51), and shortly afterwards, during a visit to Italy, several views of the Grand Canal in Venice (p. 54). They all shimmered and sparkled with light, but the artist's love of good line was apparent in each one. In spite of everything Manet was not a pure impressionist; it was perhaps in Venice that he realized this most clearly.

"I paint in the way I think best; the devil take their theories!" he declared; and he explained his aesthetic approach to the subject: "An artist must be spontaneous. That's the exact word.... If I had to express an opinion, it would be that: anything containing the spark of humanity, containing the

spirit of the age, is interesting. Anything which has neither of these is worthless." Manet faithfully put this into practice. During the following years he devoted himself to producing "modernistic" scenes. It was at this stage that he painted "Nana" (p. 52), a portrait of a woman wearing a white chemise and blue corset, for which his model was the demimondaine Henriette Hauser, known as "Lemon." "Nana" was not accepted by the selection committee for the Salon of 1877, as it was thought to be immoral. A series of canvases depicting bars, and cafés with music and singing, date from roughly the same period: "At the Bar," "The Barmaid" (p. 65), "A Reader in the Bar," "The Beer Drinkers," etc., together with various views of the Rue de Berne, including "The Rue de Berne Decked with Flags" (p. 58), which to date has fetched the highest price of any of Manet's works at a public sale.

Perhaps Manet's art is never more moving than in certain works which were painted rapidly in a fortunate moment of inspiration and which retain all the freshness of those exceptional moments. I am thinking here of canvases like "Blonde with Nude Breasts" (p. 61) or the portrait of Stéphane Mallarmé (p. 63), which are masterly examples.

During the course of his career Manet had the good fortune to be appreciated and defended by some of the greatest writers of his time. The first was Baudelaire; the second Zola; the third Mallarmé, who in 1874 wrote of the official selection committee: "Winning a temporary victory over M. Manet for a few years—what a miserable policy!"

Mallarmé was one of the most devoted of the painter's admirers. He understood him from the very first and always held him in high esteem. Manet was extremely grateful to him and the memory of this friendship is preserved in several of his works, in particular the portrait mentioned above and the illustrations made for *L'Après-Midi d'un faune*.

Manet's position didn't appear to have changed greatly since he had first started as a painter. His enemies had not laid down their arms; the press continued to abuse him. But a gradual evolution was taking place. It was not only his impressionist friends who were influenced by the great artist; many young painters felt his influence. French painting itself was imperceptibly changing.

When the La Vie Moderne Gallery, founded by Georges Charpentier, Zola's publisher, organized a Manet Exhibition in 1880, Gustave Goetschy published a rousing article in which he explained how extremely important Manet had become over the years. It is worth while to quote at some length from this article: "In Paris, the unheeding city," wrote Goetschy, "there are ten people—and only ten—who enjoy the very rare and proud privilege of being able to arouse interest by a mere gesture, who, if they so wish, are able to draw the people of Paris towards them, make their tongues wag, touch their hearts, or move them to gaiety, enthusiasm, or indignation. Édouard Manet is of their number.... Manet, who is one of our best-known artists, is one of the people whom we know least as a man. Popular opinion has long depicted him as an unsociable dauber, with an unkempt beard, long hair, and eccentric dress, crowned by a pointed, wide-brimmed hat, one of those hats which belong to the revolution of 1830. The creator of 'Olympia,' leader of the impressionists, dressed like M. Dubufe or M. Cabanel [two painters accepted by the Salon]?—impossible...." "The truth is," Goetschy went on, "that Manet is a believer and a stubborn man. He believes in his painting in the same way as Delacroix, Millet, or Courbet believed in their work, as Wagner believes in his music and Zola in naturalism. Belief is not such a stupid thing! And during the twenty years that he has been following his chosen path there have already been considerable changes. I have seen young hopefuls make

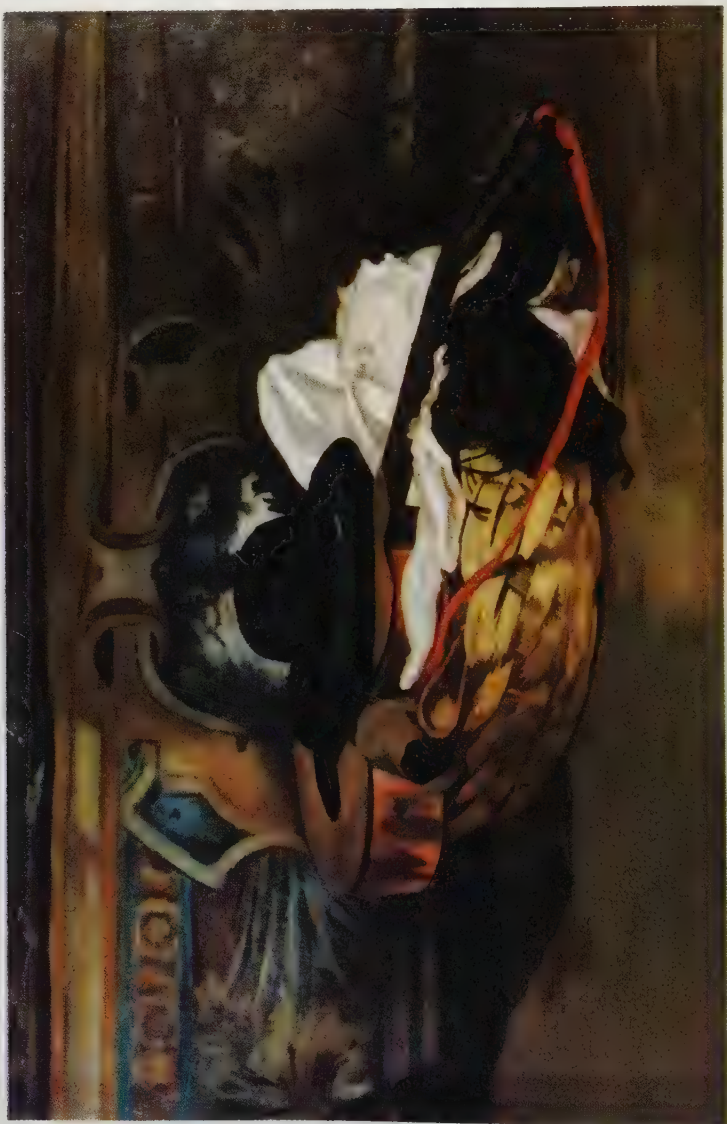


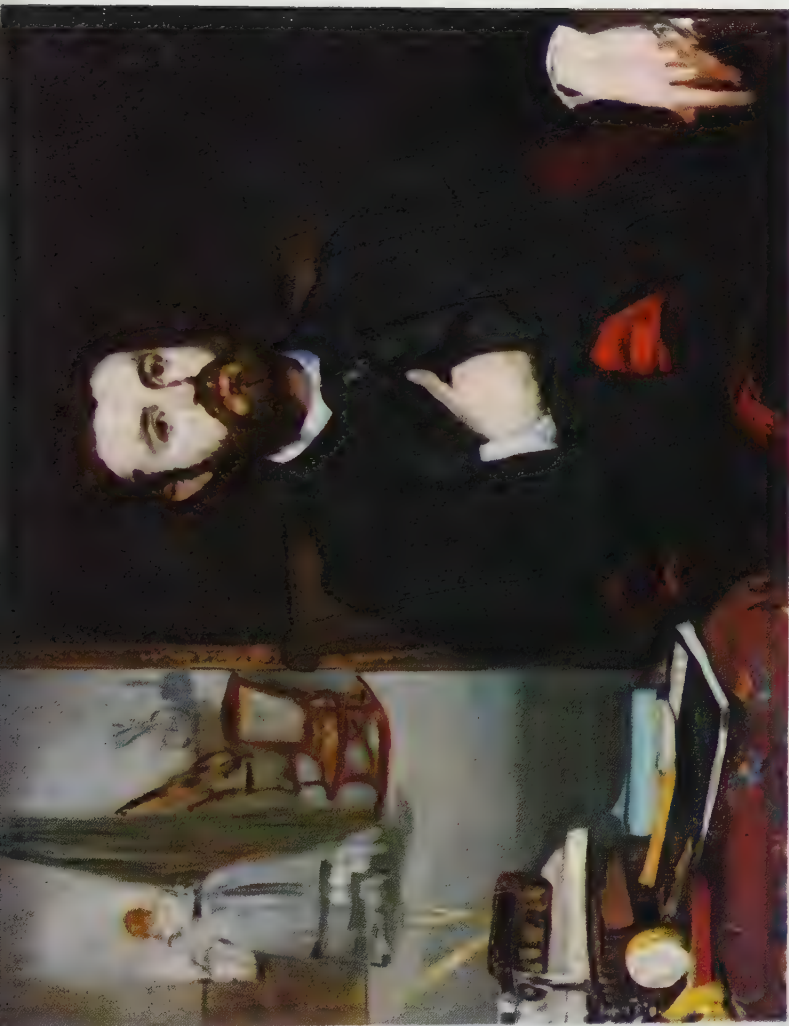








































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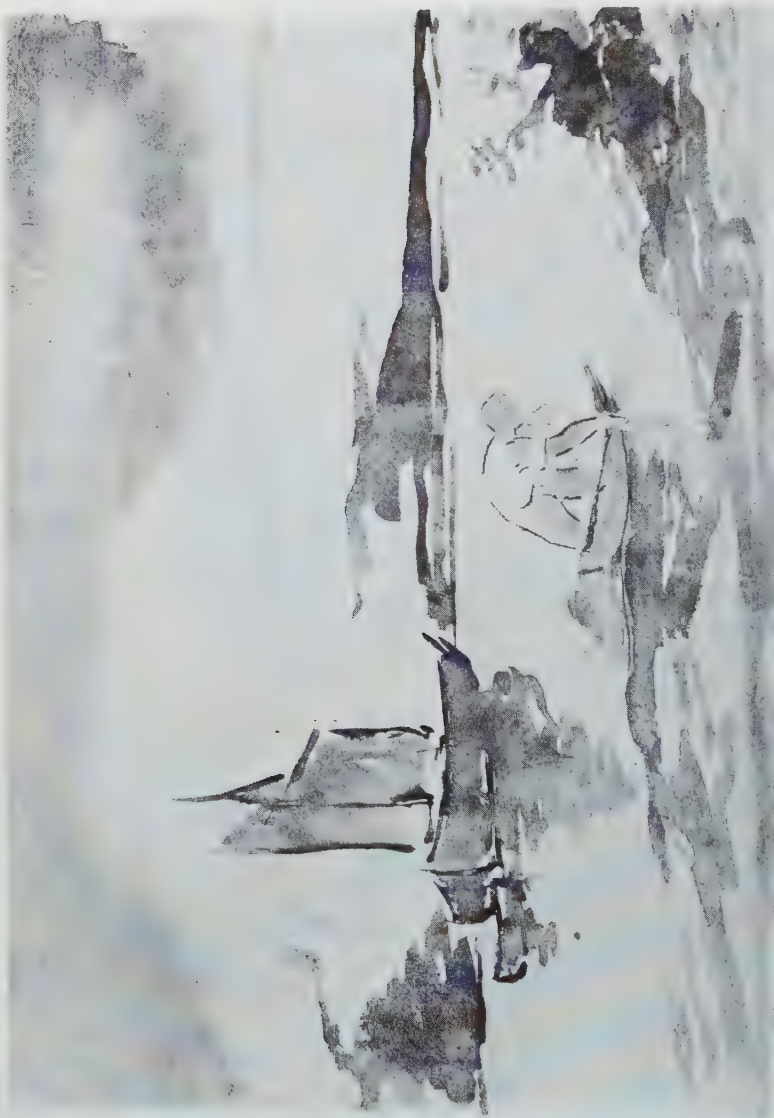










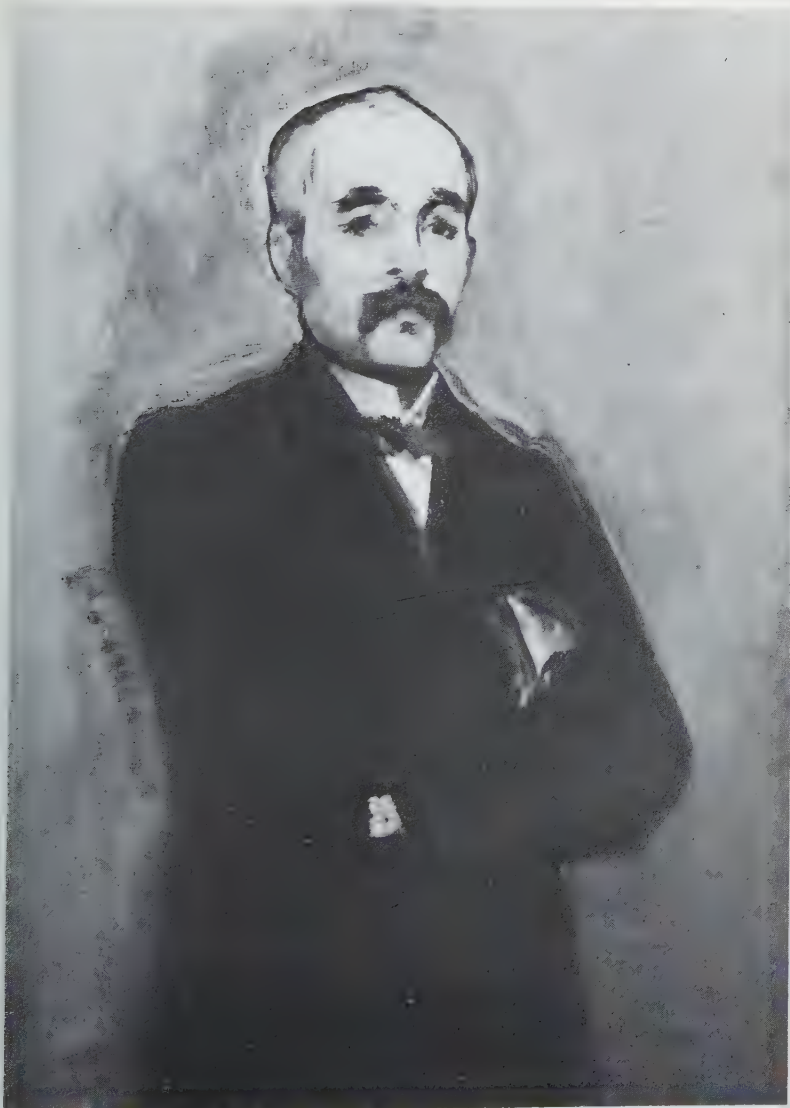












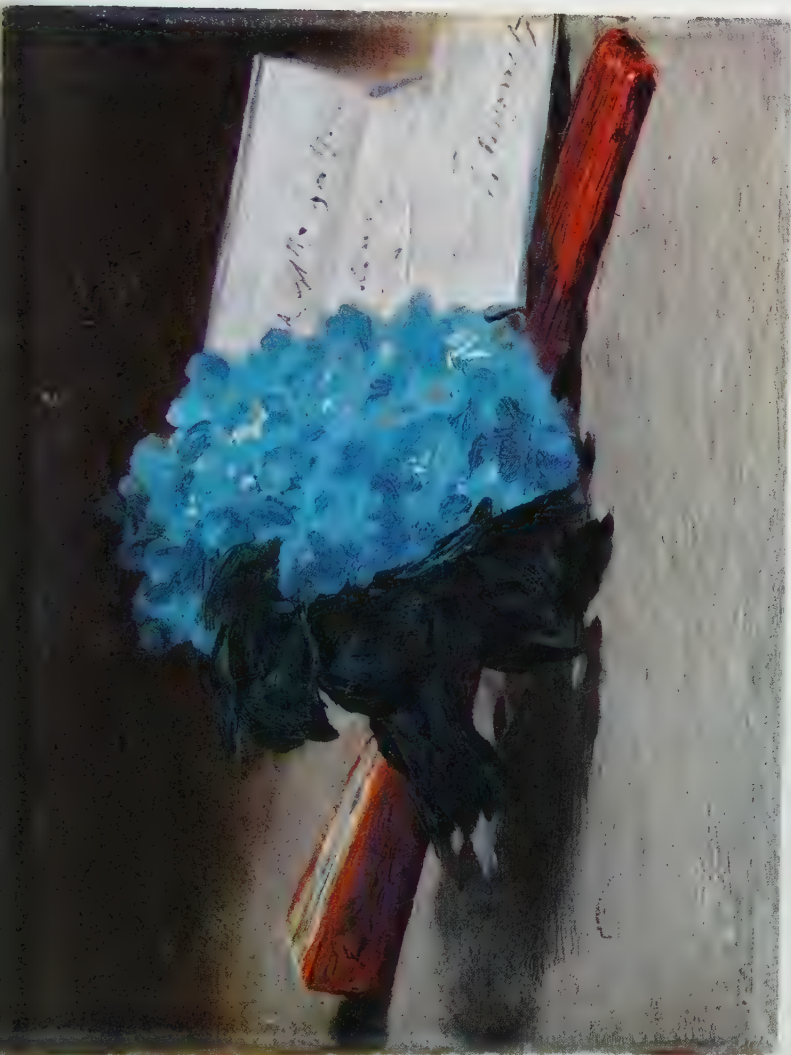








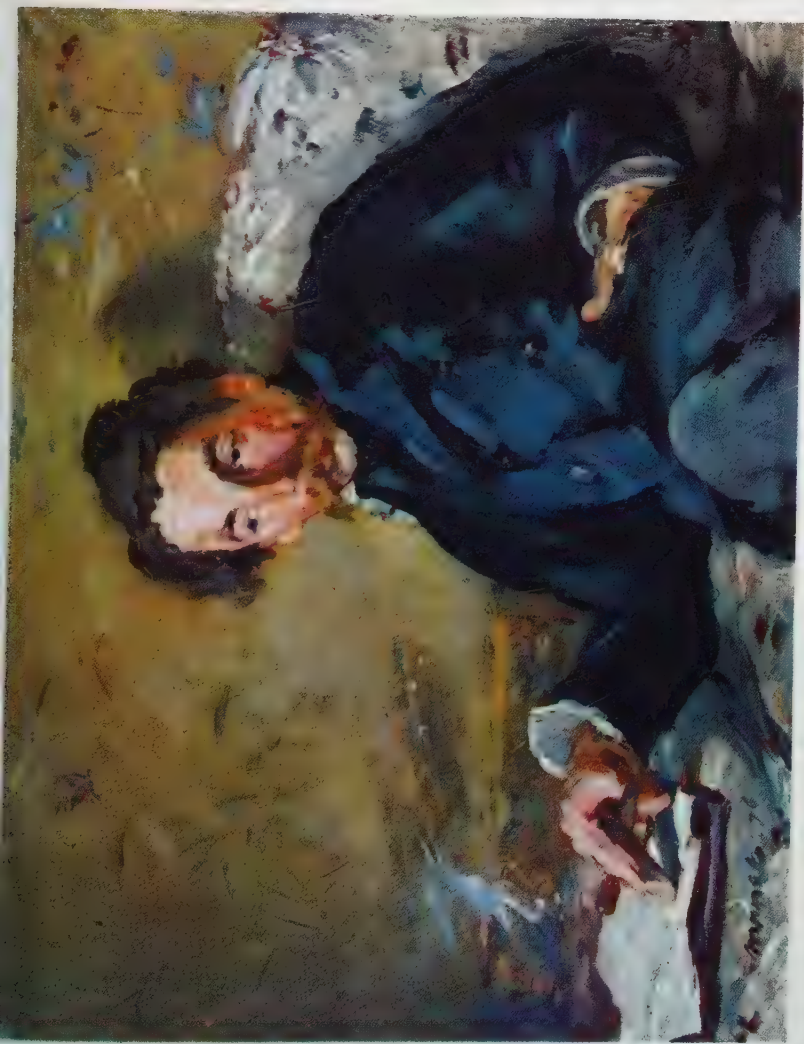
















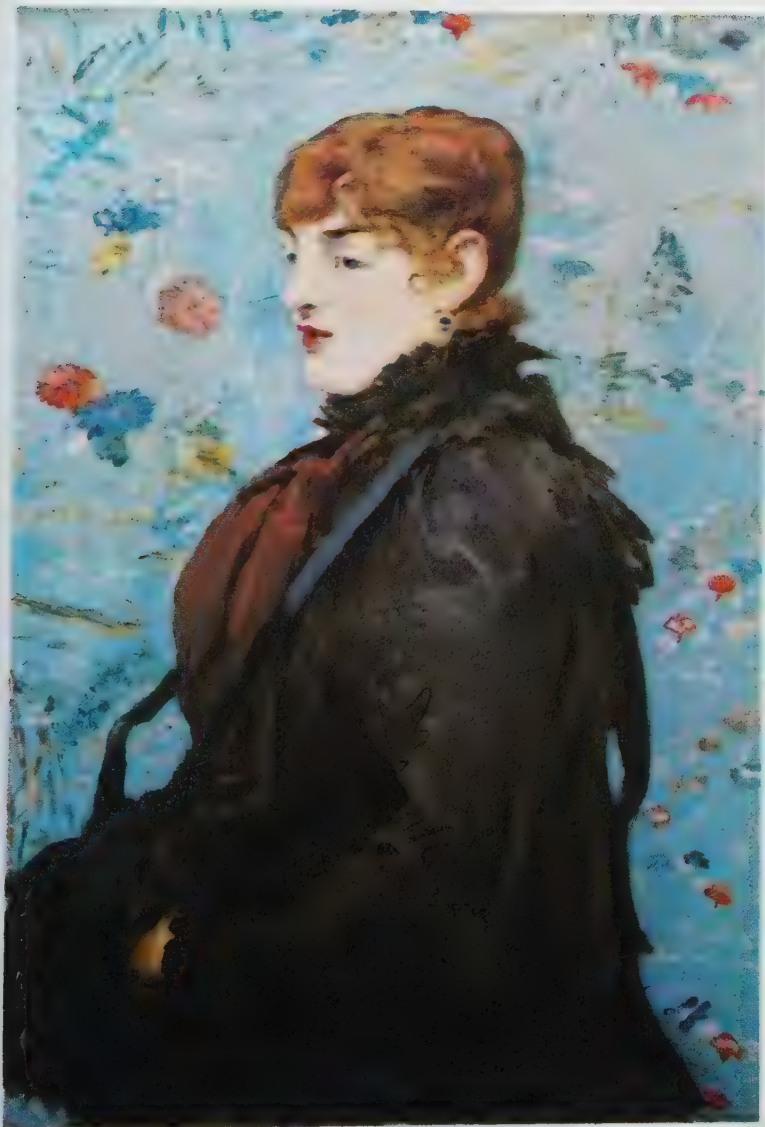














their appearance and be acclaimed by the public; to a large extent their talent has been shaped by his style, and every day they apply his teaching in their work, adopt his methods.... People who formerly roared with laughter at his canvases, and who today catch themselves studying them seriously, claim that age has brought wisdom to the artist. Isn't it rather they themselves who have grown wiser?"

The exhibition at *La Vie Moderne* consisted of twenty-five works, of which fifteen were pastel drawings. After 1878 pastel drawings occupied an important place in Manet's work; he produced eighty-five in all. The majority of them are portraits, sometimes of men—Constantin Guys, Cabaner, Emmanuel Chabrier, René Maizeroy, the English writer George Moore (p. 68)—but chiefly of women.

As time passed, Manet became more and more enamored of feminine beauty and charm. The painter's studio had become a social meeting place where men about town, elegant women, financiers, clubmen, and racegoers gathered round the artist's easel. Manet enjoyed working in this frivolous atmosphere. His pastel drawings, as I have already said, are chiefly portraits. They bring to life his familiar world, with the figures of Méry Laurent (p. 71), Isabelle Lemonnier, Jeanne Martin, Mme. Jules Guillemet, Irma Brunner, Mme. Michel Lévy, and many others.

Isabelle Lemonnier, Georges Charpentier's sister-in-law, was in the artist's thoughts a great deal during those years. Manet would send her short and charming letters, some of them illustrated with delightful water colors.

Manet's models were not always satisfied with their portraits—a not uncommon occurrence in the history of portrait painting. George Moore in particular, who nevertheless admired Manet and warmly praised his portraits, did not much care for the one of himself. "He has been bothering me to change something

here, alter something there," recounts Manet. "I shan't make any alterations to his portrait. Is it my fault if Moore looks like a squashed egg yolk and if his face is out of proportion? Anyway, the same thing applies to all our faces. Striving for symmetry is the curse of our time. There is no symmetry in Nature. One eye never matches the other; it is different. We all have a more or less crooked nose, our mouths are always irregular. But try to make a geometrician see that!"

The reasons for Manet's interest in pastel drawings were not purely aesthetic; his health was also responsible. In 1878 he began to show symptoms of one of the most serious of diseases: locomotor ataxia. He had great difficulty in standing for long in front of his easel. So from then onwards he devoted a large part of his time to pastel drawings, which required less physical effort.

But in 1879 and 1880 Manet still painted a number of portraits in oils—of Isabelle Lemonnier, George Moore, Rosita Mauri, his friend Antonin Proust, and Georges Clemenceau (p. 53).

The last years of Manet's life were overshadowed by the advances of his disease. He showed magnificent courage in the face of it and worked more energetically and with a greater will than ever. This was obviously his way of closing his eyes to his state of health.

In 1879 he took a course of treatment at a hydropathic establishment in Bellevue, and a second cure in 1880, but his health continued to deteriorate. He was living in a villa in Bellevue, and as a distraction he started painting corners of the garden, generally including figures, as in "The Walk," which is one of the best examples of this period.

Manet painted a number of still lifes at this time. These called for less concentration than was needed for composing a picture and gave him an opportunity to relax. Nevertheless, it should not be thought that these were minor works—quite the con-

trary! The fact that he produced them for no other reason than that of the pleasure of painting resulted in the wonderful freedom of style which we find so attractive. Fish, fruit (p. 27), and, to an even greater degree, flowers (pp. 29, 72) inspired him to produce pictures which we can assume to have been dashed off quickly—but with the most delicate sensitivity. Under Manet's brush lemons and pears, oysters, peonies and roses, carnations and lilacs come to pulsating, mysterious life. And what simplicity in these still-life studies! From the first, Manet went straight to the essentials, to the most expressive elements. This, moreover, was what he taught his pupil Eva Gonzalès. Placing the objects for a still life on the table, he said to her: "Make it live. Don't worry about the background. Look for the true values. You understand? When you look at this, and particularly when you think of depicting it in the way you feel it—in other words, so that it makes the same impression on the public as on you yourself—you don't look at—you don't see—the stripes on the paper over there. All right? You understand? And then when you look at the objects, you don't think of counting the scales on the salmon. You see them as little silver pearls on gray and pink. All right? What a pink, this salmon, with the bleached bone on the center, then the grays like a shading of mother-of-pearl! And the grapes, do you count the grapes? No, you don't, do you? The striking thing about them is their light amber color, and this dust which outlines the shape while softening it. . ."

What an understanding of painting there was in this advice to a pupil!

In 1881, at the age of forty-nine, Manet finally received the official approval of which he had dreamed since his youth. He showed two paintings at that year's Salon, a portrait of the polemicist Rochefort and a full-length portrait of Pertuiset, a lion hunter. Manet was awarded a second-class medal and

declared a "noncompetitor" on account of his acknowledged excellence. In addition, in December he was created Chevalier of the Legion of Honor. He was overjoyed. Upon seeing the portrait of Pertuiset, Cabanel, the chairman of the selection committee, said to his colleagues of the Salon, some of whom were raising objections: "Gentlemen, there are perhaps only four of us here who could paint a head like that."

Owing to his pleasure at receiving these long-coveted honors, Manet now gained fresh vitality. He started a series of four female portraits dedicated to the seasons, of which only two were to be completed: "Spring" (p. 70), for which the actress Jeanne de Marsy was the model, and "Autumn" (p. 71), a portrait of Méry Laurent.

Shortly afterwards, Manet set to work on his last big painting, "A Bar at the Folies-Bergère" (p. 67), a subject as difficult as it was ingenious: he painted the barmaid standing at her counter and, behind her, a mirror reflecting the room.

The picture and "Spring" were the last of Manet's paintings sent to a salon.

His opponents were beginning to give way. One of those who had criticized him most severely, Albert Wolff, the regular critic of *Le Figaro*, wrote of these pictures submitted in 1882: "I shall never agree with M. Manet in every respect; his hatred of artificial and ornate painting often makes him go too far. But, after all, it is a question of temperament; this is not everyone's kind of painting; it is the art of an immature artist, but an artist nevertheless. His corner of the Folies-Bergère is a curious composition. The Salon is full of young men whom Manet has instructed in the modern open-air art. A second canvas by M. Manet, a young woman walking in the countryside in spring, makes an enchanting impression. There is no denying it, M. Manet's art is his own; he had not borrowed it from the galleries: he has taken it from nature."



Self-portrait, 1879

Jacob Goldschmidt collection, New York

As we can see, the praise was tempered by reservations; Wolff went so far as to speak of Manet as an "immature artist." But what a difference in tone between this article and those which greeted "Luncheon on the Grass" twenty years previously! This was so obvious that Manet wrote to Wolff, not without a certain sadness and irony: "Thank you for the kind things you said about my exhibits, but I should not be averse to reading, while I am still alive, the wonderful article which you will dedicate to me after my death."

The word "death" did not appear in that letter by chance, for Manet felt that his end was near. In a very weak condition, he spent his last summer in Rueil, where he once again painted corners of the garden and some still lifes (p. 72). For as long as he could hold a palette he painted fruit and flowers.

In the spring of 1883 he was confined to bed. One of his legs had been affected by gangrene, and on April 19 it was decided to take the risk of amputating it. On April 30 Édouard Manet died.



At the funeral Edgar Degas said: "We didn't know that he was such a great man." After being disputed for so long, Manet's genius was beginning to be recognized.

His fame became ever greater as time passed. As early as 1884, a big retrospective exhibition of his work was held in the hall of the École des Beaux-Arts. In 1889 Claude Monet organized a public subscription fund to enable "Olympia" to be offered to the nation. After first being exhibited at the Luxembourg Gallery, "Olympia" was transferred to the Louvre in 1907, on the instructions of Clemenceau. By this time Manet's works were bringing higher and higher prices. In 1884 "The Music

Lesson" was sold for 4,400 francs; in 1912 the same canvas brought 120,000 francs. Today Manet is one of the "most expensive painters in the world." In London, on October 25, 1958, three of his canvases – "The Rue de Berne Decked with Flags" (p. 58), "The Walk," and a self-portrait were sold for 1,300,000 NF, 1,050,000 NF, and 760,000 NF respectively.

Manet's work comprises about four hundred oil paintings, approximately a hundred water colors, eighty-five pastel drawings, and about a hundred engravings.

No one now fails to recognize the decisive importance of these pictures, which today add luster to galleries throughout the world and to the finest private collections. A new era in the history of art began with Manet. Without wishing it – and even against his will – by the quality of his work the creator of "Olympia" directed painting along new paths. In the apt comment once made by Henri Matisse, "Manet was the first painter to express his feelings directly, thus liberating the instincts. He was the first to paint spontaneously, thereby simplifying the artist's task. In order to do so, he had to eliminate everything he had been taught and preserve only that which came from within himself."

Without doubt there were many things which distinguished Manet from his impressionist friends. But it should be noted that the word "impressionism" is itself somewhat ambiguous and that it is applied to works which do not possess a great deal in common; as proof of this, it suffices to compare the work of Degas with that of Claude Monet. It is therefore not surprising that in the end the impressionist group broke up, and each artist followed his own path, almost in isolation. Impressionism was essentially a movement of liberation; it marked a return to reality and authenticity in painting, which the members of the Salon had made stilted and unnatural.

Now it was Manet who brought about this return to authentic-

ity. Living at a time when the anecdotal and the conventional were dominant, in painting he loved only the art of painting itself; the subject, whatever its nature, was never anything more than a pretext for him to juggle with line and color, solely to please the eye, for purely aesthetic satisfaction. A painter who loved painting for its own sake, he restored to art its independence and its grandeur.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

19 MUSIC IN THE TUILERIES

Among the figures are Baudelaire, Théophile Gautier, Offenbach, Baron Taylor, Aurélien Scholl, Fantin-Latour, and Champfleury.

1860; oil; $30 \times 46\frac{3}{4}$ in.; National Gallery, London

20 THE ABSINTHE DRINKER

1858-59; oil; $71\frac{1}{4} \times 41\frac{3}{4}$ in.; Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen

21 M. AND MME. AUGUSTE MANET (the artist's parents)

1860; oil; $43 \times 35\frac{1}{2}$ in.; Rouart collection, Paris

22 THE READER (Joseph Gall, landscape artist)

1861; oil; $40\frac{1}{4} \times 32\frac{1}{4}$ in.; City Art Museum, St. Louis, U.S.A.

23 LOLA DE VALENCIA (a celebrated Spanish dancer)

1862; oil; $48\frac{1}{2} \times 36\frac{1}{4}$ in.; Louvre, Paris

24 GUITAR AND HAT

Manet painted this still life to hang in his studio. In 1923 Joseph Rignault bought it from the Hôtel Drouot for 42 francs and donated it to the Calvet Gallery in Avignon.

1862; oil; $30\frac{1}{2} \times 47\frac{3}{4}$ in.; Calvet Gallery, Avignon

25 ZACHARIE ASTRUC

1864; oil; $35 \times 45\frac{1}{2}$ in.; Kunsthalle, Bremen

26 LUNCHEON ON THE GRASS (Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe)

Victorine Meurent posed for this canvas, together with the artist's brother Eugène (on the right) and his future brother-in-law Ferdinand Leenhoff.

1863; oil; $85\frac{1}{4} \times 106\frac{1}{4}$ in.; Louvre, Paris

27 STILL LIFE WITH FRUIT (Nature morte aux fruits)

1864; oil; $17\frac{3}{4} \times 28\frac{3}{4}$ in.; Louvre, Paris

28 BATTLE BETWEEN THE "KEARSARGE" AND THE "ALABAMA"

Manet witnessed this naval engagement off Cherbourg. 1864; oil; $57 \times 51\frac{1}{4}$ in.; John J. Johnson collection, Philadelphia

- 29 PEONIES IN A VASE
1864-65; oil; $36\frac{1}{2} \times 27\frac{1}{4}$ in.; Louvre, Paris
- 30 OLYMPIA
Manet drew his inspiration for this work from Titian's "Venus of Urbino"; his model was Victorine Meurent.
1863; oil; $51\frac{1}{2} \times 73\frac{3}{4}$ in.; Louvre, Paris
- 31 STUDY FOR "OLYMPIA"
1863; red-chalk drawing; Cabinet des Dessins, Louvre, Paris
- 32 OLYMPIA (detail)
- 33 THE FIFE PLAYER
This portrait of a young fife player of the Imperial Guard was not accepted for the Salon of 1866.
1866; oil; $63 \times 38\frac{1}{2}$ in.; Louvre, Paris
- 34 THÉODORE DURET
"I think this chap of yours is very jaunty," Duret wrote to the artist when he received the canvas. "It's certainly painting."
1868; oil; $17 \times 13\frac{3}{4}$ in.; Musée du Petit-Palais, Paris
- 35 ÉMILE ZOLA
This portrait was Manet's way of expressing his gratitude to the writer who defended him so spiritedly in the press. The canvas was bequeathed to the Louvre by Zola's widow in 1918.
1868; oil; $57\frac{1}{4} \times 43\frac{1}{4}$ in.; Louvre, Paris
- 36 THE BALCONY
To the left, Berthe Morisot, the artist's future sister-in-law; at her right, Jenny Clauss, a musician; behind, the painter Antonine Guillemet.
1868; oil; $67\frac{3}{4} \times 49\frac{1}{4}$ in.; Louvre, Paris
- 37 BOY WITH CHERRIES
About 1858; oil; $25\frac{3}{4} \times 21\frac{1}{2}$ in.; National Gallery of Art, Washington

- 38 JEANNE DUVAL
1862; oil; $35\frac{1}{2} \times 44\frac{1}{2}$ in.; Budapest Museum
- 39 CHILD WITH SWORD
1860-61; etching
- 40 THE DEAD CHRIST AND ANGELS
Baudelaire pointed out to Manet that he had made a mistake in showing Christ's wound on the left side.
1864; oil; $68\frac{3}{4} \times 61$ in.; H. O. Havemeyer collection, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
- 41 MATADOR SALUTING
1866; oil; $67\frac{1}{2} \times 44\frac{1}{2}$ in.; H. O. Havemeyer collection, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
- 42 THE EXECUTION OF EMPEROR MAXIMILIAN
This canvas might usefully be compared with Goya's "Executions of May 3, 1808."
1867; oil; $99\frac{1}{2} \times 120$ in.; Kunsthalle, Mannheim
- 43 MME. ÉDUARD MANET AT THE PIANO
Mme. E. Manet (Suzanne Leenhoff) was music teacher to the Manet children; in this capacity she met her future husband.
1868; oil; $15\frac{1}{4} \times 18$ in.; Louvre, Paris
- 44 THE CATS' RENDEZVOUS
This picture was intended for a poster advertising the publication of Champfleury's book on cats.
1869; lithograph; $25\frac{1}{4} \times 20\frac{1}{2}$ in.
- 45 STUDY OF A WOMAN
Brush drawing; Pinakothek, Munich
- 46 EVA GONZALÈS (a pupil of Manet)
1870; oil; $78 \times 53\frac{1}{4}$ in.; National Gallery, London
- 47 GOOD BOCK (the lithographer Émile Bellot)
1873; oil; $37 \times 32\frac{1}{2}$ in.; Carroll S. Tyson collection, Philadelphia

- 48 SAILBOATS ON THE RIVER
Water color; $8\frac{1}{4} \times 11\frac{1}{2}$ in.; private collection, Holland
- 49 BANKS OF THE SEINE AT ARGENTEUIL
Like "In a Boat" (p. 60) and "Argenteuil" (p. 64), this canvas belongs to Manet's impressionist period. In 1874 the painter often used to work with Claude Monet, who was then living at Argenteuil.
1874; oil; $23\frac{3}{4} \times 38\frac{1}{2}$ in.; Lady Aberconway collection, London
- 50 THE ARTIST (Marcellin Desboutin, a friend of Manet)
1875; oil; $76 \times 51\frac{1}{4}$ in.; private collection
- 51 THE WASHING
1875; oil; $57 \times 45\frac{1}{4}$ in.; Barnes Foundation, Merion, Pa.
- 52 NANA (Henriette Hauser, known as "Lemon")
1877; oil; $59\frac{1}{4} \times 45\frac{1}{2}$ in.; Kunsthalle, Hamburg
- 53 CLEMENCEAU
This painting is unfinished, as the politician was able to pose only once.
1879; oil; $37 \times 29\frac{1}{4}$ in.; Louvre, Paris
- 54 THE GRAND CANAL IN VENICE
1875; oil; $18\frac{3}{4} \times 22\frac{1}{2}$ in.; Mrs. J. Watson Webb collection, New York
- 55 THE PORT OF BORDEAUX
1871; oil; $24 \times 39\frac{1}{2}$ in.; private collection, Zurich
- 56 BERTHE MORISOT BEHIND A FAN
1874; oil; $22\frac{3}{4} \times 17$ in.; Louvre, Paris
- 57 BERTHE MORISOT IN A BLACK HAT
1872; oil; $21\frac{3}{4} \times 15$ in.; Rouart collection, Paris
- 58 THE RUE DE BERNE DECKED WITH FLAGS (La Rue de Berne pavoisée). This painting is sometimes called "La Rue

de Mosnier pavoisée" or "The Man with Crutches." On October 25, 1958, this canvas was sold at an auction in London for £ 113,000, the highest price paid to date for one of Manet's pictures. The artist himself sold it for 500 francs in 1879.

1878; oil; $25\frac{1}{2} \times 31\frac{3}{4}$ in.; former Goldschmidt collection

59 BUNCH OF VIOLETS AND FAN

This picture is dedicated: "To Mlle. Berthe. . . E. Manet."

1872; oil; $8\frac{1}{4} \times 10\frac{1}{2}$ in.; Rouart collection, Paris

60 IN A BOAT

Painted at Argenteuil. The man in the painting is Rudolph Leenhoff, brother-in-law of the artist.

1874; oil; $38\frac{1}{4} \times 51\frac{1}{4}$ in.; H. O. Havemeyer collection, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

61 BLONDE WITH NUDE BREASTS

1878; oil; $24\frac{1}{4} \times 20$ in.; Louvre, Paris

62 LADY WITH FANS (Nina de Callias, whose salon in Paris was much frequented)

63 STÉPHANE MALLARMÉ

This small canvas, one of the artist's masterpieces, is a reminder of the great friendship between the painter and the poet who wrote *L'Après-Midi d'un faune*.

1876; oil; $10\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{1}{4}$ in.; Louvre, Paris

64 ARGENTEUIL

As on p. 60, the man in the painting is Rudolph Leenhoff. 1874; oil; $58\frac{1}{2} \times 51\frac{1}{2}$ in.; Musée des Beaux-Arts, Tournai, Belgium

65 THE BARMAID (La Serveuse de bocks)

This canvas, which was originally in the collection of Prince Matsukata, was acquired by the Louvre in 1952 in accordance with the terms of the Peace Treaty with Japan.

1878-79; oil; $30\frac{1}{4} \times 25\frac{1}{4}$ in.; Louvre, Paris

66 A CORNER OF THE BELLEVUE GARDEN

1880; oil; $21\frac{1}{4} \times 25\frac{1}{2}$ in.; Rouart collection, Paris

67 A BAR AT THE FOLIÈS-BERGÈRE

1881; oil; $37\frac{3}{4} \times 51$ in.; Courtauld Institute of Art, London

68 GEORGE MOORE

Moore, who was a painter before devoting himself to literature, was one of Manet's closest friends and warmest admirers. We are indebted to him for the interesting *Memoirs of My Dead Life*.

1879; pastel drawing; $21\frac{3}{4} \times 13\frac{1}{4}$ in.; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (gift of Mrs. Ralph J. Hines, 1955)

69 THE BARMAID

1881; oil; $13\frac{1}{4} \times 21\frac{1}{4}$ in.; Musée Magnin, Dijon, France

70 SPRING (Jeanne de Marsy)

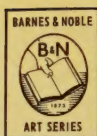
1881; oil; $28\frac{3}{4} \times 20$ in.; Payne Bingham collection, New York

71 AUTUMN (Méry Laurent)

1881; oil; $28\frac{3}{4} \times 20$ in.; Musée de Nancy, France

72 ROSES AND TULIPS IN A DRAGON VASE

1882-83; oil; $21\frac{1}{4} \times 13$ in.; Buhrle collection, Zurich



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